COMIX WAVE 21 © December, 1984. © Clay Geerdes. Box 7081, Berkeley, CA 94707. All Rights Reserved. Logo: David Miller. Subs: $11 for 48. I'm busy on a book project this Fall, so have to mail several issues together and take a couple of months off. Have a nice holiday(s)! C.G.

I was in the Comic Store waiting for Dave Sim who was half an hour late and some of the staff mentioned that I was cynical, even snide, in my columns. Di Schutz said, "All realists are cynical." Hmmm. The original Cynics, the Greeks, held that virtue was the only good and that its essence lay in self-control and independence. Today, however, the term is usually associated with one who continually finds fault, usually through adherence to the old axiom that human conduct is motivated mainly by self-interest. A cynic is one who is more than a teeny bit distrustful of optimism, particularly when there is a profit involved. Well, whatever the original meanings and connotations of the term, I feel a bit uneasy with the label of cynic. I am more of a skeptic than a cynic, meaning I have more of a systematic doubt about beliefs, attitudes, politics, posteurs, public figures, comixstars than a truly negative attitude toward them. Ultimately I would prefer to be judged more by what I do than by what I say because I am prone to be many different people and viewpoints in my public writing, none of which is necessarily me. I am often critical of comic collectors and their idiosyncracies, and, since I am one, there is always a great deal of self-parody involved. I am more frequently critical of the excesses of media, print and electronic, because that is what I am involved with more of my working hours. I watch t-v a lot while I am studying or writing and when I see something corrupt, stupid, or flagrantly disgusting, I say so in one of my columns. I am a fan, critical of my own fannish behavior, mainly because I am older now and have the advantage over the younger fan in that I can reflect upon some of the things I did in the past, the absurd, perhaps, clarifying itself through repetition. In 1957, I went to see Elvis Presley in concert at the San Francisco Civic Auditorium. I stood in line for hours, sat on the balcony far enough away so that he appeared to be a tiny dot of red, and endured almost two hours of solid screaming. I didn't hear a single word he sang, not one. From the moment he came onstage, the girls started screaming, and they were still screaming and crying hysterically after he had long been slipped out a side door and into his limo and back to the hotel. I walked out, actually, I was pushed and shoved out into the street by the same people, all of them thinking they would somehow find Elvis standing around in the street just waiting to sign their t-shirts (one of his trips was to sign his name on a girl's chest with her lipstick). That experience left my ears numb for the rest of the day. Well, today I don't go to concerts and pay for the privilege of watching a lot of teenage girls scream themselves to orgasm over Iggy Pop or Bruce Springsteen or Michael Jackson. If I like the music, I buy an album and listen to it in the comfort of my living room. So if I am "cynical" about those who will camp out for two days to get tickets to something they may not even get close enough to see, about folks who will pay $30 dollars to be part of a screaming herd, well, color me cynical. Where comics are concerned, age puts a bit of a damper on collecting. I see the old folks sitting in front of their collections year after year at the conventions and it begins to look more and more like me sitting there and is that how I want to spend my final years? When I was eight and collecting ACTION and SUPERMAN, I expected to live forever. Someday I would have all the issues of every title. That was cute, huh? There were 46 million comic books published in 1946. How could I have ever realized my daydream of having all of the titles? I couldn't, but fantasies are untroubled at the age of eight, which fade out in later life. Someone said I was jaded and that's fairly accurate. I can accept that. It's one of the reasons why I rarely write anything about the current runs of straight comics. I know all of the formulae and I know the business quite well. I know what is being done and why it is being done, just as I know why other things are not being done.

But think about this for a minute. Cynicism or the pose of cynic-as-critic did not stimulate me to keep COMIX WAVE and COMIX WORLD going all these years. It was my love of comics and cartooning that did that; it was also my basic interest in people who enjoy the form.

- Clay Geerdes
1984

THE BABYFAT T-SHIRT. Shall I do it? If at least 20 of you order one for $12, I'll have a few dozen done in color. What I will do is keep your check and wait awhile. If I get enough, I'll do them and send you a shirt; if not, I'll return your check. I'll have Medium and Large. Make a nice Xmas gift. FREE SPEECH MOVEMENT: This October was the 20th Anniversary of the FSM at UC Berkeley and all the old timers were on hand to speak and participate. Mario Savio gave the keynote speech in a noon rally at Sproul Plaza on Tuesday, Oct 2. If you're into that aspect of the movement, I've got a few papers you can get for your collection: an EXPRESS and a DAILY CAL. $2.50 will cover postage and handling.* ITCHY SCALY 3 is $2 pp from Brad Johnson, Skyway Hotel, Rm 10, 438 Broadway St., S. F. CALIF 94133.* THE TELEGRAPH WIRE editorial address is now 69 Carnation Road, Levittown, N Y 11756.*

Mario Savio

Gary Larson

BRAIN WASH

When you analyze advertisements to check out how your brain is being washed these days, you have to remember that there are not only sublims and embeds which are deliberately built into the component parts of the ad, but accidental sublims as well. A deliberate sublim is designed to associate the product with something deep in your psyche, some need you may not even be aware of, some sexual kink in your character, even a death wish or a funeral fantasy. Sublims may be visual, hidden in the design of the ad, or they may be aural, tagged onto the end of a spoken commercial but at a sound speed the ear doesn't register. The whole idea of a sublim or an embed is to sell you something, a product or an idea, without your awareness that you are being sold. Subliminal advertising is corrupt and unethical and widely practiced by most of the major corporations. T-V spots are put together with all the care of a surgeon performing a heart transplant. Every detail, every image is carefully analyzed. If the predominant concept is oral sex and status tricking as it is in the soft drink ads, then the sexual act is broken down into a series of components, each of which is then organized and filmed. The process is easy to analyze if you have a VCP. Just record the ad and run it in slow motion. The beautiful girl you'll never get next to, the sucking lips on the straw, the sweat, all of it will become clear to you. If you want to get into the history of the development of the various psychological techniques which were assimilated into advertising after World War 2, read Sigmund Freud's INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (1899). You'll find Jung's MODERN MAN IN SEARCH OF A SOUL useful for it's discussion of primitive magic and fetishism, and perhaps the best book on the subject of sublims in advertising is Wilson Brian Key's SUBLIMINAL PERSUASION.

THE END OF 1984 and it wasn't all it was hyped to be, huh? WEIRDO 11 out with a new Crumb cover and his interpretation of the three bears. Fans of Reid Fleming will be happy with HEARTBREAK COMICS; this is the rest of Boswell from the GEORGIA STRAIGHT. Nice stuff. $2.50 from your dealer.* Chromazone sent me KROMALAFFING, a nice folio comic. No price. Write to 408 Queen Street West #16, Tornto, M5N 2A7 for info.* EPIC 27- new Cobalt-60 material done by Mark Bode and Larry Todd.* OUTSIDE IN 17, 50/stamp from Michael Dowers, 3615 Phinney N, Seattle, WA 98103.* ORIGINAL COMICS 2 is 50C/stamp from ORIGINAL PUBS, 233 Heather Highlands, Inkerman, PA 18640.* Ug papers are gone, but the comix are still in circulation. ZAP 1 has been in print for 14 years now, longer than any other comic book in the history of the medium. Congrats to Crumb. I know a lot of people are still reading the ZAPS even though few are talking about them.* This is the final mailing of '84, guys. Expect more stuff in January of '85. Keep drawing and writing and doing it. STONER MAN 11 is out (50'st from me) and we're working on a new issue of COMIX WAVE MAGAZINE. C.G.